TOYOTA REACHES 496 UNINTENDED ACCELERATION MDL SETTLEMENTS (HTTPS://TOPCLASSACTIONS.COM/LAWSUIT-SETTLEMENTS/LAWSUIT-NEWS/826336-TOYOTA-REACHES-496-UNINTENDED-ACCELERATION-MDL-SETTLEMENTS/)

By Christina Davis
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Nearly 500 lawsuits alleging defects caused death and injury from unintended acceleration in Toyota vehicles have been settled by the automotive giant.

Toyota was hit with a multitude of lawsuits after allegations that the vehicles started accelerating without warning due to a defect in the electronics. Plaintiffs from all over the country alleged that they had suffered personal injuries and deaths, as well as a depreciation in value of their Toyota cars due to the defect.

Millions of automobiles were recalled by Toyota after the claims of unintended acceleration surfaced in class action lawsuits and other litigation across the country, including vehicles under the Lexus nameplate. In one Oklahoma wrongful death lawsuit, a plaintiff won after alleging that the acceleration did not occur because of loose or sticky floor mats, but because of a defect in the electronic throttle system. After that decision, the auto maker decided to work on settling the remaining cases.

In 2013, Toyota offered more than $1 billion to Toyota vehicle owners to settle a class action lawsuit over the depreciation of the affected vehicles. The remaining claims for personal injuries and property damage suffered as a result of unintended acceleration were sent to an **intensive settlement process (https://topclassactions.com/lawsuit-settlements/lawsuit-news/10751-toyota-begins-settlement-talks-unintended-acceleration-litigation/)**set to start in 2014.

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By 2014, the parties reported that 145 cases had been settled (https://topclassactions.com/lawsuit-settlements/lawsuit-news/42554-toyota-reaches-145-unintended-acceleration-injury-settlements/). In the latest status report, attorneys say that they are "continuing to make good progress."

According to class action lawsuit attorneys, the goal in the settlement process was to appropriately track the merits of each case and use them as precedent for later cases subject to the settlement.

"Since the issuance and adoption of the [Intensive Settlement Process] Order, Toyota's counsel have had extensive and intensive negotiations with plaintiffs' firms representing a large number of plaintiffs and claimants," states the progress report made to the court. "These efforts have included numerous face-to face meetings with plaintiffs' counsel … in cities around the nation. These negotiations continue."

In total, the parties report that Toyota has reached settlement agreements with 496 lawsuits. Of those lawsuits, 175 are for personal injuries suffered in the multidistrict litigation (MDL) and 87 are cases in the Joint Council Coordination Proceeding (JCCP).

More than 200 cases have settled outside of those processes. The parties report that only four cases have not yet initiated the settlement process.

"The [Intensive Settlement Process] is continuing to make good progress as the parties attempt to resolve the various personal injury, wrongful death and/or property damage cases pending before this Court and in other courts," notes the Toyota MDL status report.

The total value of the class action settlement will not be known until all Class Members have settled with Toyota.

The plaintiffs are represented by Elizabeth J. Cabraser of Lieff Cabraser Heimann & Bernstein LLP, Mark P. Robinson Jr. and Donald H. Slavik of Robinson Calcagnie Robinson Shapiro Davis Inc., and W. Daniel Miles III of Beasley Allen Crow Methvin Portis & Miles PC.

The **Toyota Unintended Acceleration Class Action Lawsuit** is *In re: Toyota Motor Corp. Unintended Acceleration Marketing, Sales Practices and Products Liability Litigation*, Case No. 8:10-ml-02151, in the U.S. District Court for the Central District of California, Southern Division.

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